

and liberalization with Korea's Asian neighbors. To expedite this process, President Kim met with his counterparts from the region at the first two meetings of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] Leaders' Conference. In a major address at last year's gathering of the group in Indonesia, he outlined his proposal for new regional initiatives in the areas of trade and investment liberalization, manpower development, and telecommunications infrastructure. President Kim emphasized that it was imperative for APEC to take a leading role in liberalizing world trade and that the highest priority should be given to dismantling all barriers to trade and investment.

President Kim's foreign policy agenda has also included efforts to increase Korea's manpower and financial contributions to such pressing international issues as arms control, the abolition of poverty, and environmental protection through membership in various U.N. organizations and other multinational bodies.

One of President Kim's major policy goals has also been the improvement of relations with North Korea. Through close consultations with the United States and other major allies, and the United Nations, the ROK Government has pressed the North to comply with its obligation as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1992 to accept external scrutiny of its nuclear weapons program.

The success of this effort was highlighted on October 21, 1994, in Geneva when the United States and North Korea signed the agreed framework. It requires North Korea to dismantle its nuclear program over the next 10 years and accept full-scope international inspections of all its nuclear facilities in exchange for two 1,000 megawatt light-water nuclear reactors [LWR's]. To promote inter-Korean cooperation, the Republic of Korea will play a central role in the \$4.5 billion LWR project.

In an effort to promote improved South-North relations, on June 21, the ROK Government announced that South and North Korea had reached an agreement in which the South will supply the North with 150,000 tons of rice for free. The food aid will be provided to the North in order to help alleviate the critical food shortage in North Korea. President Kim hopes that this measure, along with his previous efforts to gradually lift restrictions on South Korean business investment and trade with the North, will serve as an impetus for improved South-North political relations and thereby help lay a foundation for the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all Members of Congress will find this record of achievement impressive, and will want to welcome President Kim when he arrives to address a joint meeting of Congress on July 26.

MEDICARE'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 1995

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, the Medicare Program is a critical safety net for millions of seniors and disabled Americans. And as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Medicare Program this week, there is an im-

portant statistic to keep in mind: 99.1% of Americans over age 65 have health insurance coverage.

We must remember that it has not always been this way. The period that preceded the implementation of the Medicare Program is a tragic chapter in our Nation's history—elderly citizens unable to receive or pay for medical care—choosing between medicine and food—people fearing to reach what should be their golden years.

During this week of reflection on the Medicare Program, let us not forget that it was the tireless advocacy of the Democratic Party that transferred the Medicare Program from theory to reality.

The historical record is unmistakably clear: if it had been up to the Republican Party, the Medicare Program would never have been enacted. For example, in 1965, the year Medicare was created, 93 percent of House Republicans voted to replace the proposed Medicare Program with a Republican substitute—which was a voluntary plan, with no guaranteed financing and no guaranteed benefits.

Thirty years later, the Medicare Program is still facing Republican assaults. Now, they want to cut the program by \$270 billion to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy. Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues are not in tune with the desires of the American people.

Polling conducted in early June by NBC/Wall Street Journal show a public concerned with Republican priorities. When asked to identify their top goals for Congress, most voters chose protecting Medicare and making sure the wealthy pay their fair share of taxes as top issues.

Instead, the GOP has chosen a variety of ways to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy by increasing medical costs for seniors. The Republican budget task force outlined several options for cutting Medicare. The following are a sample of these options:

Increase premium for new beneficiaries who use Medicare fee-for-service. Beginning in 1999, all new enrollees choosing Medicare fee-for-service would pay a \$20 increase to their part B premium.

Increase Medicare deductible. The part B Medicare deductible for senior citizens is \$100. Republicans want to increase it to \$150 by 1996.

Start charging a co-payment for clinical laboratory and home health services. Senior citizens are covered by Medicare for these services, but Republicans propose to require senior citizens to pay a 20 percent co-payment for lab and home health services, by 1999.

Increase part B premium \$5 per month for 1996–99 and \$7 per month beginning in 2000. In 1995, senior citizens pay \$46.10 per month. By the year 2002, the Republicans will force seniors to pay an increase of up to \$87.10 per month. This is equal to a \$492 increase per year to senior citizens by the year 2002. In the year 1996, seniors will see their premium increase by \$60.

All of these cost increases to senior citizens do not even affect the part A funding that the Republicans claim will go insolvent. Instead, the Republicans are going to hit seniors, who are living on small fixed incomes, with all of these increases so that the wealthy can have their tax cuts.

If the Republicans are legitimately concerned about the solvency of the Medicare Program, why are their budget proposals not addressing these questions?

In calendar year 1994, hospital insurance [HI], or part A, covered about 32 million seniors and 4 million disabled enrollees at a cost of \$104.5 billion. The payroll taxes of 141 million workers used to support these costs amounted to \$95.3 billion.

Obviously, these numbers do not match up. And as the number of beneficiaries increases, these numbers will continue to move further and further apart—which is exactly the reason why the Medicare trustees report showed that the hospital insurance program fails the test of short-range financial adequacy.

Do these problems need to be addressed? Absolutely. Are the Republicans addressing such problems? Absolutely not. If anything, their budgetary proposals only worsen the situation and are nothing more than smoke and mirror gimmicks to justify tax breaks for the wealthy.

My chief concern today is the moral bankruptcy of those who would do the bidding of the powerful while cutting Medicare and turning their backs on the interests of the weak. If we launch this assault on benefits to the elderly, where will it stop?

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OWENS FAMILY OF FREDERIC, WI

HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 1995

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Owens Family of Frederic, WI, operators of Owens Farms, Inc., one of five Wisconsin families selected as regional winners in the 1995 Dairy Farm Family of the Year Program.

The Owens Farm involves 10 family members: Wilfred and Linda Owens, Walter and Joyce Owens, and Roger and Kim Owens; the brothers' parents, Harold and Agnes Owens; and grandsons, Stevens and Douglas Owens. Together they milk 312 Jersey cows on their farm which is located in Polk and Burnett Counties in northwestern Wisconsin.

Despite dairy prices that have remained around \$12 per hundredweight for more than 10 years, the Owens farm has found ways to remain profitable through the adoption of more efficient machinery and better management.

In addition to their hard work on the farm, the family has been active off the farm, with the local 4-H Club, local churches, dairy organizations, and other community organizations.

The Owens family has been recognized by the University of Wisconsin Centers for Dairy Profitability based on their farm business performance, dairy industry and community leadership, management systems, and business innovations. The Owens farm has proven itself a well-managed, progressive, and profitable business.

The Owens family, along with the other regional winners from Wisconsin, will be recognized at a banquet in Madison, WI, on July 27. To all the winning families, and especially to the Owens family, I want to extend my congratulations.